/963 cont./

422 this method of procedure by our Yamana on two occasions. Once he bartered tobacco with a man for a dog, but since the dog belonged to the man's wife, she forced Fitz-Roy to give the animal back to her. Snow (p. 264 also confirms from his own experience: "I believe they have a sort of property right amongst them, and I have seen one of the oldest women exercising authority over the rest of her people. Wishing to buy a canoe, it was refused me on the ground that it belonged to her, and she would not part with it" /cited in English/.

Every Yamana is completely free to take good care of his property or to neglect it completely. No one even prevents him from wantonly destroying his things. If he lacks something he must personally look around for a replacement. Objects that are [425] found may not be appropriated by the finder, and if he nevertheless keeps them, he risks being labeled a thief. Whatever a person has owned in life /976/ remains his after his death. That is • [761] why the belongings of a deceased person are burned and destroyed, inasmuch as no one could legally take them as his property. One does not even encroach upon a dead owner's right to his personal [427] property. The Yamana are unacquainted with the actual inheritance of anything whatever.

β. Family Property

422 Since every person owns his individual property, he also
593 brings it with him into his marriage, without, however, giving up his exclusive right to it. He uses each article freely and without hindrance and replaces for himself anything and everything that has become unserviceable or is lost. As we have just said, one of the partners in marriage would not dare, at his own discretion, to dispose of an object belonging to the other partner.

423 When a marriage takes place, a new configuration of life is
593 always begun, for the family forms a very compact economic unit. The word "family" is used here in its narrower sense, namely, as the social unit of father, mother, and unmarried children. The new configuration of life also demands its own right to certain implements common to the union as such. The solidarity of family

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425 423 We know that the large territory of the Yamana is divided into five zones with boundaries (p. 199 /untranslated/) which also apply to the right of free food-seeking. Within one's home territory he has free access to everything that nature supplies, but if he goes into neighboring territory and there takes possession of something for his own use, he must be able to justify it. Obvious scarcity of the necessities of life in his more limited home territory or the stranding of a whale affords such justification. A friendly visit is also sufficient reason, for sometimes someone marries into another dialect group from which his nearest kin occasionally visit him. The stranger would not be able to stay too long in the neighboring territory without /976/ arousing displeasure among the local residents and even evoking grave hostility (388). Hence, there, too,

388. I believe that this is the meaning of the following words of Bridges in Hyades (j):180: "The natives dare not go to places where they do not have friends or where they are not known, for they would probably be killed" /translated from French/.

everyone makes himself the owner of whatever he directly confiscates as ownerless property. The members of each dialect group, however, regard themselves as having priority over all natural stores and animals in their local area.

425 When the rightful owner of an object hands it over to another person, he relinquishes his right of ownership and it passes to the other person. The free decision of the owner himself is required in [428] such cases. The Yamana are unacquainted with an actual hereditary right in the sense that certain descendants can legally take over the possessions of an owner after his death, simply because of their [169] kinship with him. Actually, when a person dies, everything he has owned is purposely destroyed by fire because no one has a right to it as such. Anyone who has received something from another person or is keeping it for him soon returns it (389), simply because the

389. Snow (s):I, 345 confirms this from his own observations: "Several times I procured

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764 who knows about it avoids it out of anxious fear. Other people, not the nearest relatives, accompany or assist the men who bury the corpse. When they have finished their work, they quietly and unobtrusively rejoin those who have gathered in a hut and are loudly mourning.

766 As has been said, as soon as death occurs, immediate preparations for burial are made unless one must await the coming dawn because of the darkness of the night. In exceptional cases the body is interred in a small cave nearby or in the cavity of a rock if there is earth or gravel available to cover it. Even in our day the corpse has been destroyed in the hut fire. If, for instance, a married couple were all alone in some spot and the husband died, and other people, although notified by the customary triple smoke signal, could not get there quickly because of high waves, the surviving wife would be obliged to make the best of it. Without any special preparation of the corpse, she would drag it into the hut fire and pile brush and firewood on top of it. Soon the flames would leap so high that the hut itself would catch fire. The woman would keep the fire going until the corpse was completely destroyed. The same thing was done if the path into the forest was blocked or the customary burial in the ground was in any way prevented. The concern of the survivors is always to do away with the corpse without delay, and even a person by himself is able to do that.

764 Among the Yamana, just as among the Selk'nam (Vol. I, 552), it has been customary from ancient times to destroy all the
•769 possessions of the deceased, by consigning them to the flames, throwing them into the sea, or placing the individual pieces in the grave with the corpse. Bridges (a):206 confirms that the deceased's "property is either cast into the sea or burned" /cited in English/, and Bove (c):159 adds: "In the grave of a man, they bury pieces of harpoons, spears, slings, etc., and with a woman, oars and fishing gear." These things are in no way meant as actual burial accessories; the survivors are guided solely by the desire to destroy in one way or another everything that belonged to the deceased. That is why it is a matter of course for them "to burn the hut of the deceased, which was his last abode, and to leave the area for some time," to repeat Bove's (c):159 words.

/1110/ Directly after the burial, as soon as their own things have been brought to safety, the widower or the widow usually sets fire to the hut, "setting fire to the grass and bushes of the neighbourhood" /cited in English/ (Bridges [i]:1). The meaning of this is that the survivors want to "do all they can to blot out all remembrance of the departed" /cited in English/, according to Bridges (VSA:XI, 259;1884). There should be nothing to remind them of the great loss they suffered when that beloved person was taken away from them. This is especially true of parents and children, as well as of spouses. Many a person behaves like one demented and, in his excitement, does not even shy from sacrificing indispensable objects of his own. The individual articles need not be named, since everything is indiscriminately destroyed. The surviving spouse even destroys the canoe if there is a prospect of fleeing from this place of death in another vessel. The canoe is regarded as the personal field of activity of the wife, and it would constantly remind the surviving husband of her. A mother is particularly ruthless with all the little things used by her deceased child. She furiously tosses articles of clothing, toys, little baskets, and other things into the fire. She, too, feels as though she must leave the hut when she sees the empty places where her child ate, slept, and played. For a long time the parents are haunted by the bitterest sorrow. If a father whose daughter has been snatched away by death is lucky in hunting, he carefully examines his spoils; he abandons female birds and sea lions because they remind him of his daughter. A hunter who mourns a dead son acts similarly; he takes only the female animals of those he has killed and throws the males into the sea. Our Yamana have a specific term for the animals that a grieving man puts aside in memory of his deceased child: *čiyelčigra*, which is perhaps related to *čiyčk čfella* in BD:128. The dog is the sole exception. Out of pity, and also because he is particularly valuable, they do not want to kill him; hence he is given to the older son, daughter, or a relative of the deceased.

Anyone who has helped at a burial and in the destruction of the possessions of the deceased is rewarded with gifts from the nearest relatives who dispense them voluntarily (p. 1060). Bridges (x):206 has already pointed out that "liberal presents are made to those who assist at the burning or the burial" /cited in English/.

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74 Hyades (p):335 and (q):379 interpret this custom erroneously: "The heir divides among the friends of the deceased what belonged to the latter, as though the nearest relatives did not wish to draw any kind of profit from the death of one of them" /translated from French/. The idea of bequeathing the possessions of a deceased person to others is unfamiliar to our Fuegians. Rather, they emphasize that only the owner personally has a right to them, and therefore the belongings of anyone who has departed this life must be destroyed. RD:127 gives tiyelágas, /1111/ "to give away things specially those left by the dead, as a sign of sorrow for the dead, as near relatives were expected to do to those who were not connected by kin with the dead" /cited in English/. This statement, which in part is inaccurate, is valid only to the extent I have just indicated; I refer to the meaning of tiyelágas, which I obtained from present-day Yamana.

76 All the Indians are especially brisk in dealing with the corpse of a yékamuš: almost without exception it is burned. His tools and utensils are placed upon the fire from the start, and while the flames are consuming everything, the people present also toss in all kinds of things that they happen to have at hand, such as small baskets, ornaments, tools, and so forth. They want to show their esteem for the yékamuš and also that they are ruthlessly depriving themselves of even their own indispensible utensils and implements.

3. Minor Manifestations of Sorrow

152 Since our Fuegians do not know anything about the fate of souls after death and regard the separation from them as a state that will last forever, each death causes them untold sorrow. This is so sincere and so deeply felt that in this respect they surpass many Europeans. But everyone who has traveled through these regions has had an opportunity to convince himself of this, since our Indians conceal their grief from strangers. I was a witness to it several times and can also rely on corresponding reports of missionaries. Bove (e):188, who does not even mention that he personally observed a funeral, nevertheless, and perhaps for that very reason, speaks of their "indifference toward the dead. The crime they utter, the way

1. Gwinde--1969 8-6 (1958-1959) 1957 [illegible] Tshigan 0256

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stricken by death and is sometimes in a difficult position. The duty to give unselfish aid which burns ardently in everyone's soul, especially at the sight of the universally recognized smoke signal, compulsively drives them to the scene of misfortune. The mourners themselves appreciate it very much if many tribal members soon answer their summons.

After the initial, very lively outbursts have somewhat abated, the painful event drives all present away from the scene of the misfortune with uncanny force. Within four days of the suicide, after the hut of the deceased has been burned, the campsite is changed. Usually each of the families /1114/ which have experienced the death departs in a separate direction, for each family wishes to be by itself if possible so that the others will not constantly remind them of the event. The missionaries in particular mentioned this conduct which is common to both the Tsonanu and the Seliš'tsam (Vol. I, 868) (52). Hyades (p).373 also confirms

> 52. There is one example only, which Bridges (YSA.XII,10,1963) furnished on November 10, 1864. In Walala the youngest child of the well-known Ghobbo died, and he immediately left this region. "For it is an ever-existing fact that the Fonglans will not, sometimes for a long time, return to the place where their relatives have died" /stood in English/.

this: "In general the hut in which a native died is burned, and the place where it stood is abandoned for a long time by the friends of the deceased" /translated from French/. They, of course, stay away from this place for a certain time, and meanwhile it is altered by the blind forces of nature. If the grave or the burial place has become unrecognizable as a result of plant growth or other circumstances, no one feels any aversion to settling down there.

The strict rule of never mentioning the name of the deceased is in accord with the effort they make not to be reminded in any way of the deceased. There are several witnesses for this. The first is Fitz-Roy (p).181 who can refer directly to Jemmy Button: "He would not talk of a dead person, saying, with a grave shake

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SI46 Yahgan SI46

437 [439] [806] [486] rency of any kind, and no weights or measures. Barter was carried on among the *Yahgan* themselves, with the *Ona* and *Alacaluf*, and with the Whites. Barter by exchange of presents was common; a gift was made, regardless often of the wishes of the recipient, who could not refuse it without affronting the giver, and who was definitely expected to give something in return.

●768 428 Inheritance played a very minor role. Much or most of the deceased's property was burnt with the body. The person's dog fell to the oldest son or other near relative or acquaintance. Some of the more valuable or useful property might be bartered or given away to distant persons. Such burning, bartering, and giving away were intended to take from sight what would cause sorrow to the survivors by reminding them of the beloved departed, and to signify the survivors' desire not to profit by the death.

685 Stealing was considered decidedly reprehensible; but thefts actually occurred, even among their own people, not as daily matters, so to speak, but it would seem, not very uncommonly. A habitual thief, who failed to reform, was in the end boycotted—a severe punishment under *Yahgan* living conditions.

594 Generous sharing of food with kin and friends was the rule. Hospitality was extended as a matter of course.

46 Labor.—Neither wage nor slave labor existed. There was a little, but not much, labor in common. Each family was a relatively independent economic unit. The division of labor was almost exclusively a sexual one, with no organized or unorganized craftsmen making their living by specialized trades.

462 The man's task was to hunt marine mammals, otter, guanaco, and birds, to make his own weapons, to build and repair the canoe, to do the harder work in hut building. The woman's task was to care for the younger children, to cook, tend the fire and look after the hut generally, to paddle and have general management of the canoe in which the family spent so much of its time, to do all the skinwork and leatherwork, such as preparing skins, sewing clothing, and making skin bags and pouches, to make baskets, and, last but not least, to collect mussels, much of the fish and other sea food, eggs, fungi, and berries. [942] Since mussels were the chief food resource, the woman's part as provider was an extremely important one.

[522] Probably her crucial role as food provider had a good deal to do with her relatively high status in *Yahgan* society. Certain tasks fell to man and woman jointly, such as building the hut, and hunting from the canoe, when the man did the killing while the woman maneuvered the craft. All in all, if we take into account *Yahgan* living conditions, although the list of women's tasks is longer than that of the men's, actually the sexual division of labor appears to have been a fairly equitable one.